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**PREPARED STATEMENT BEFORE THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING
ON
OVERSIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE**

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1997

You have heard Mr. DiMario and Mr. Kelley speak of the wide array of product and dissemination services that GPO provides. It is my privilege to provide the Committee with an example of the many innovative ways in which GPO is assisting Government publishers in making their information product visions into realities.

I will do this by briefly describing the history of our recent alliance with the Department of Commerce on Commerce Business Daily (known as CBD).

Early last summer, GPO learned that a new program area at Commerce had assumed responsibility for CBD. Employees from GPO visited Commerce to discuss CBD with the new program managers. At this meeting, they outlined their vision for a new, electronic, CBD that would serve the needs of the Government procurement community and American business in the information age.

A collaborative effort involving virtually every area of GPO was then undertaken, resulting in a proposal to fulfill this vision, which was submitted to Commerce for consideration. After performing a business case analysis of the 16 proposals received from commercial firms and Government organizations, Commerce found GPO's "to be superior from technical, cost, and business risk perspectives." They also cited the fact that GPO was the only organization submitting a proposal that had the necessary infrastructure in place to completely fulfill their requirements. In addition, they pointed to the success GPO had experienced in its other electronic efforts on projects with a similar scope.

GPO and Commerce signed a strategic alliance on August 27, 1996 to implement the GPO solution. GPO then went to work and on December 6, 1996, as scheduled, the new system, known as *CBDNet*, went live; a mere three months later.

CBDNet provides for all phases of the process envisioned by Commerce.

- This process begins with electronic submission of notices by contracting officials directly through the World Wide Web and e-mail (for those not ready to submit electronically, notices can still be sent to GPO in hardcopy).

- Submitters receive immediate feedback on the acceptance or rejection of their submission. If rejected, they are shown what needs to be corrected before resubmission.
- Once accepted, submitted notices are immediately freely available online for search and retrieval by the public.
- At the same time, these notices are passed electronically to the typesetting and composition system, where they are programmatically converted to SGML format, and composed into a printed issue of CBD.
- The daily issue is electronically sent to the printing contractor, who prints and mails the printed copies of CBD to subscribers.
- Information on submissions is also sent to our Financial Management area for use in creating detailed monthly bills sent to submitting agencies.
- The SGML file of each daily issue is sent electronically, as soon as it is completed, to 17 value-added providers who purchase the CBD data for use in creating private-sector CBD offerings.
- Toll-free telephone and e-mail user support is available from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, EST, on Federal workdays to assist agency participants and the general public in utilizing *CBDNet*.

This new joint project has succeeded in making CBD information freely accessible in real-time over the Internet, while preserving the printed version for those who still wish to receive daily issues in paper format.

- It was accomplished in a manner that realized a number of Commerce's desires for an improved CBD:
- First, CBD information is freely available to all, in real-time, through the Internet.
- Second, It is easier and more timely for agencies to electronically submit notices for inclusion in CBD.
- Third, the cost per notice for these submissions was dramatically reduced (from \$18.00 to \$5.00).
- Fourth, support is available to both Federal agencies and public users of CBD.
- Fifth, the time necessary to typeset and compose the printed version was reduced, and the delivery of the final copy to the printing contractor for the production of the daily printed issues was enhanced.
- And finally, commercial value-added providers receive the daily CBD information much faster, in an enhanced format, and at a 20 percent reduction in cost.

CBDNet has been extraordinarily well received by the participating agencies and the user community. In fact, in an unusual development, *CBDNet* was awarded an Association for Federal Information Resources Management (AFFIRM) Leadership Award while still in its testing phase.

Approximately 10,000 notices per month have been submitted by agencies for inclusion in CBD. Usage of *CBDNet* has grown dramatically over its first three months of operation as more and

more businesses and the public become aware of *CBDNet*'s existence. During February, there were almost 600,000 hits recorded on *CBDNet*, with approximately 250,000 notices downloaded.

While there are numerous other examples of the new and innovative ways GPO is serving Federal agencies, I will not elaborate on them in the interest of time. I would, however, be happy to supply any additional information upon request.